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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3631st meeting of the Security Council, held on 15 February 1996 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council deeply deplores the continuation of armed hostilities in Afghanistan, which have brought death and destruction to the people and property of the country and threaten the peace and security of the region.

"The Security Council is particularly concerned about the recent intensification of shelling and air attacks in and around the capital city of Kabul and the blockade of the city, which has prevented the delivery of foodstuffs, fuel and other humanitarian items to its population.

"The Security Council calls on the parties involved to end the hostilities forthwith and not to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian aid and other needed supplies to the innocent civilians of the city. In this regard, the Council commends the efforts of the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies in Afghanistan, which are working under the most trying circumstances, and the airlift of food supplies from Peshawar to Kabul, and urges the international community to continue its support of those life-saving efforts.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned that the continued conflict in Afghanistan provides fertile ground for terrorism, arms transfers and drug trafficking, which destabilize the whole region and beyond. It calls on the leaders of the Afghan parties to put aside their differences and to halt such activities.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for the efforts of the United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan to bring about a peaceful solution to the conflict through the establishment of a fully representative, broad-based, authoritative council acceptable to all Afghans. It calls upon all Afghans to cooperate fully with the Special Mission as it works towards this goal.

"The Security Council calls on all States in a position to do so to take steps to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan, in particular by urging the parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with the United Nations Special Mission. It also calls on all States to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and to prevent the flow to the Afghan parties of weapons and other supplies that can fuel the fighting.

"The Security Council urges the captors of the members of the crew of the Russian aircraft in Kandahar to release them immediately and without any preconditions.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan. It reaffirms its readiness to assist the Afghan people in their efforts to return peace and normalcy to their country, and it encourages all States, as well as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement and others, to support the efforts of the United Nations Special Mission to the same end.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the situation in Afghanistan."